# Military Children and Youth Symposium

**Peterson Air Force Base, Colorado**

ISFAC
Inter-Service Family Assistance Committee

**April 13, 2011**

Colorado State University
School of Social Work

# Prevention, Empowerment, and Resiliency Collaborative (PERC)

*A Trauma-Informed, Evidence-Based, and Culturally-Centered Approach*

# Our PERC Program Model

- Community-based
- Interdisciplinary collaboration
- Trauma-informed intervention
- Evidence-based practice
- Culturally-centered
- Strengths-based
- Family-focused

# Unique Challenges Related to Military Life and Culture

- Deployment-related stressors such as parental separation, family reunification, and reintegration.
- Frequent moves disrupt relationships with friends
- Some may experience welcoming home a parent who returns with a combat injury or illness, or of facing a parent's death.
- Recent research reveals an increase in military child maltreatment and neglect.

# What is Traumatic Grief?

Childhood traumatic grief may occur following the death of a loved one when the child perceives the experience as traumatic. The death may have been sudden and unexpected, or it may have been an anticipated death due to illness or other natural causes. Childhood traumatic grief is distinct from the normal bereavement process and PTSD, but it shares features of both.

The distinguishing feature of childhood traumatic grief is that trauma symptoms interfere with the child's ability to navigate the typical bereavement process, and may include the following:

- *Intrusive memories about the death*
- *Avoidance and numbing*
- *Physical or emotional symptoms of increased arousal*

# What is Traumatic Grief?

In childhood traumatic grief, the interaction of traumatic and grief symptoms is such that any thoughts or reminders, even happy ones, about the person who died can lead to frightening thoughts, images, or memories of how the person died. Three types of reminders may trigger them:

- *Trauma reminders: places, situations, people, sights, smells, or sounds reminiscent of the death.*
- *Loss reminders: people, places, objects, situations, thoughts, or memories that are reminders of the* person who died
- *Change reminders: situations, people, places, or things reminding the child of changes in his or her* life resulting from the death

# Trauma Narrative

# Importance of Fostering Resiliency

- What is resiliency?
- What does it look like?

# Tips for Helping Children Cope and Fostering Resilience

- Maintain a secure and predictable environment
- Help children establish and maintain a close relationship with an adult
- Be sure that children and youth know techniques for regulating their emotions
- Watch for negative reactions and provide interventions

# Tips for Helping Children Cope and Fostering Resilience (cont.)

- Keep children informed, discuss the facts, and limit news coverage
- Help children establish a set of values to guide their actions
- Help children develop a positive outlook for the future
- Take care of your own physical and mental health

# Considerations for Parents and Professionals

- Characteristics related to the traumatic event
- Children's individual traits and resources
- Developmental levels
- Family environment
- Community support

# Contact Information

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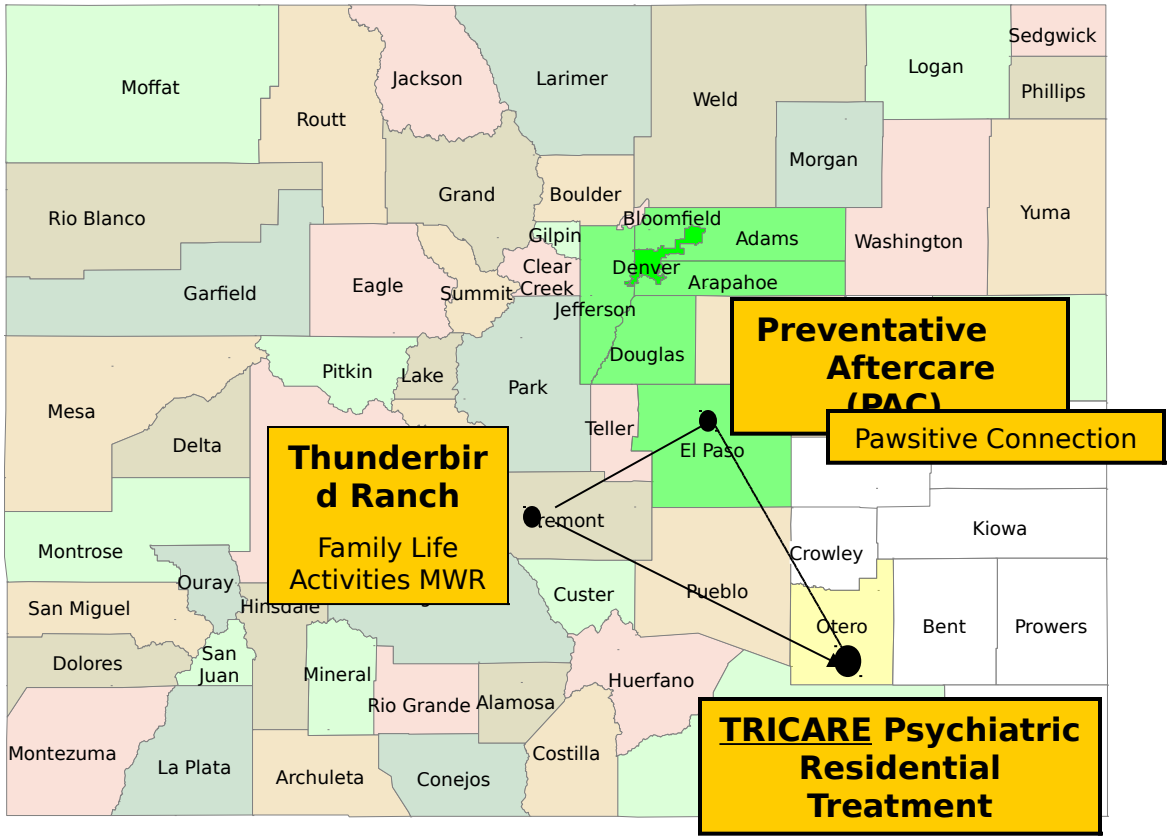
CBR YOUTHCONNECT

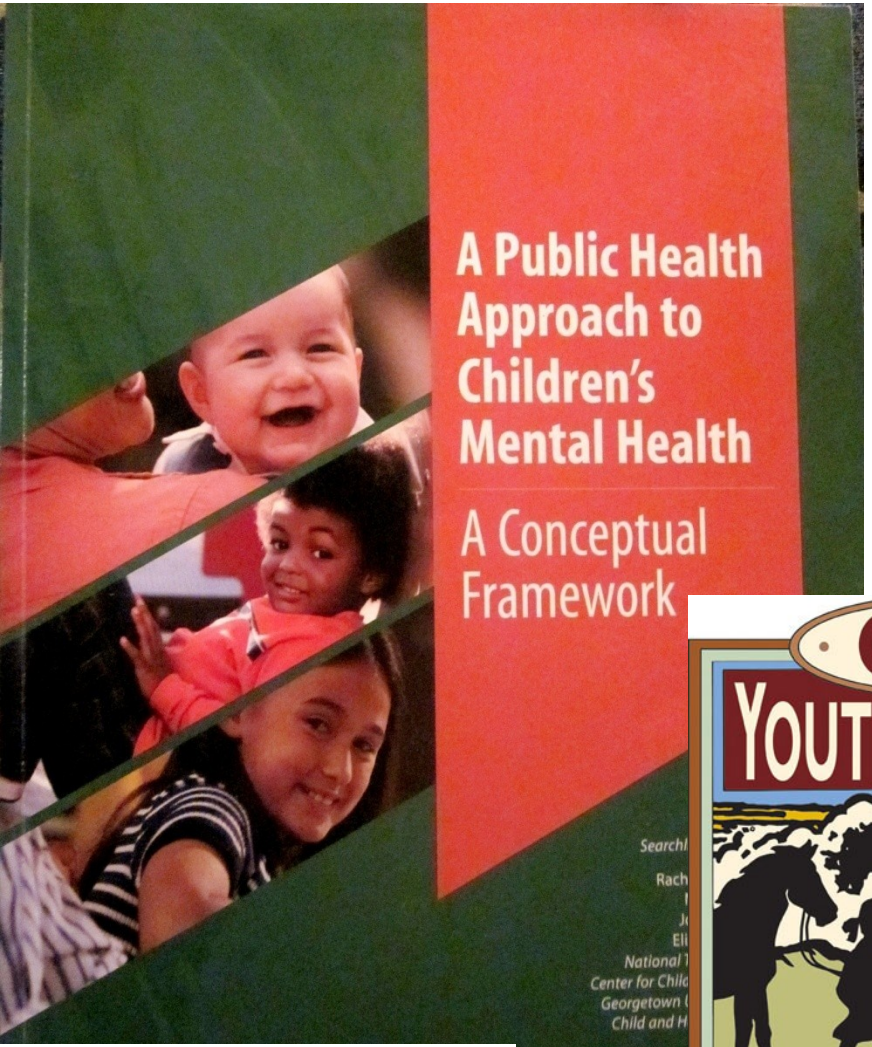
"Creating Connections that Inspire Change in Children and Families"

# Military Family Initiative

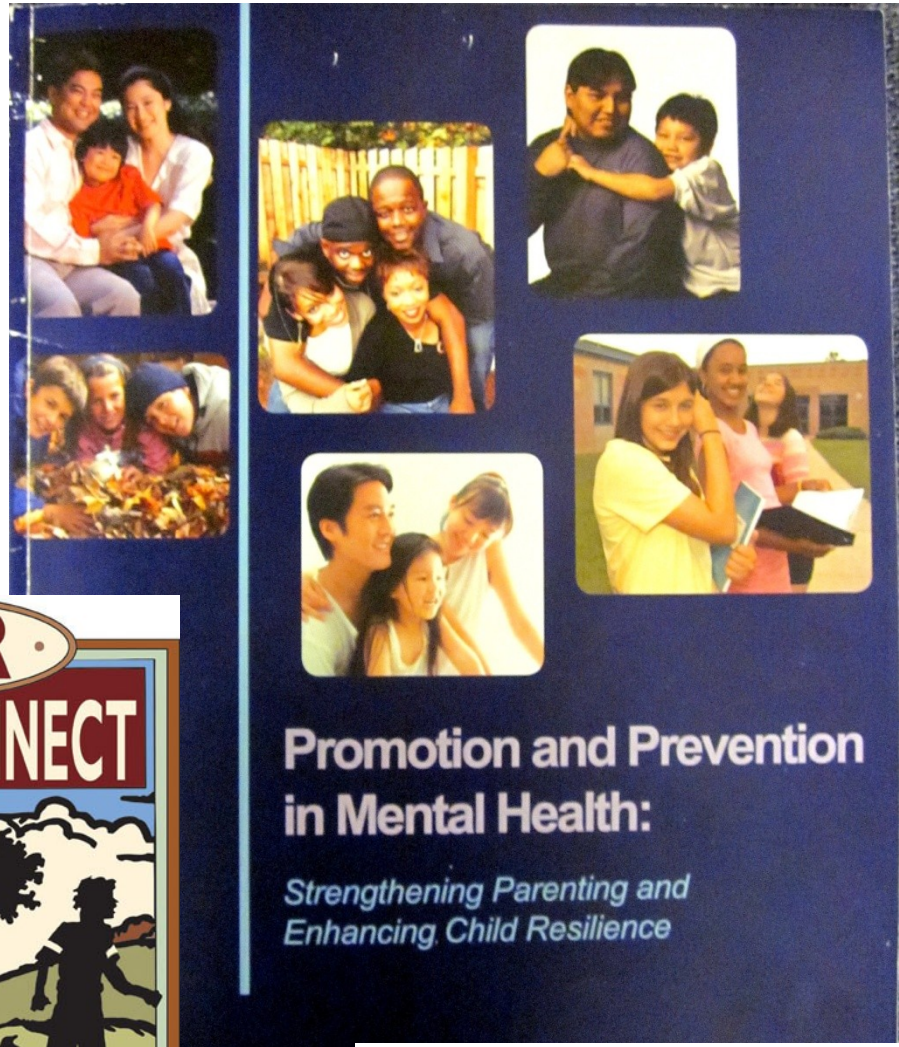



# The Road to Resilience

# The Road to Resilience



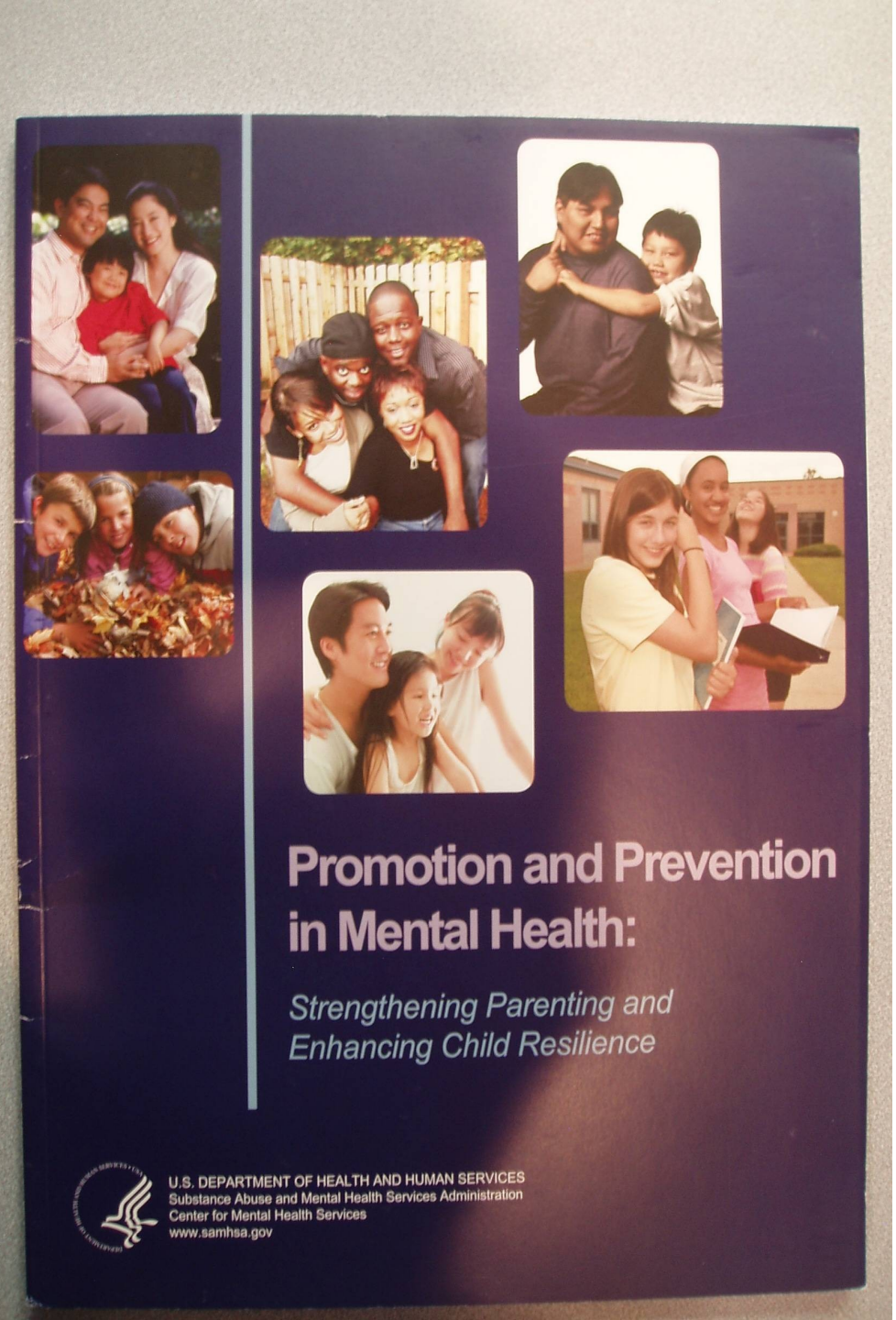

50th Anniversary
Colorado Boys Ranch Foundation
1959-2009




CBR
YOUTHCONNECT

GEORGETOWN UNIVERSITY
Center for Child and Human Development

U.S. Dept of Health and Human Services


Promotion and Prevention in Mental Health:
Strengthening Parenting and Enhancing Child Resilience
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration
Center for Mental Health Services
www.samhsa.gov

# Resilience

- "The human capacity to face, overcome and even be transformed by adversity"

# Social / Emotional Learning

- "The process of acquiring skills to recognize and manage emotions, develop caring and concern for others, make responsible decisions, establish positive relationships, and handle challenging situations effectively"

- **+ Collaborative for Academic, Social and Emotional Learning (CASEL)**

# Resilience: Key Factors

(Contribute to Risks and Protections)

## BIOLOGY – (Nature)

- Genetics – intelligence, temperament, innate abilities (physical, sensory, learning style)
- Illness, injury, disability

## ENVIRONMENT – (Nurture)

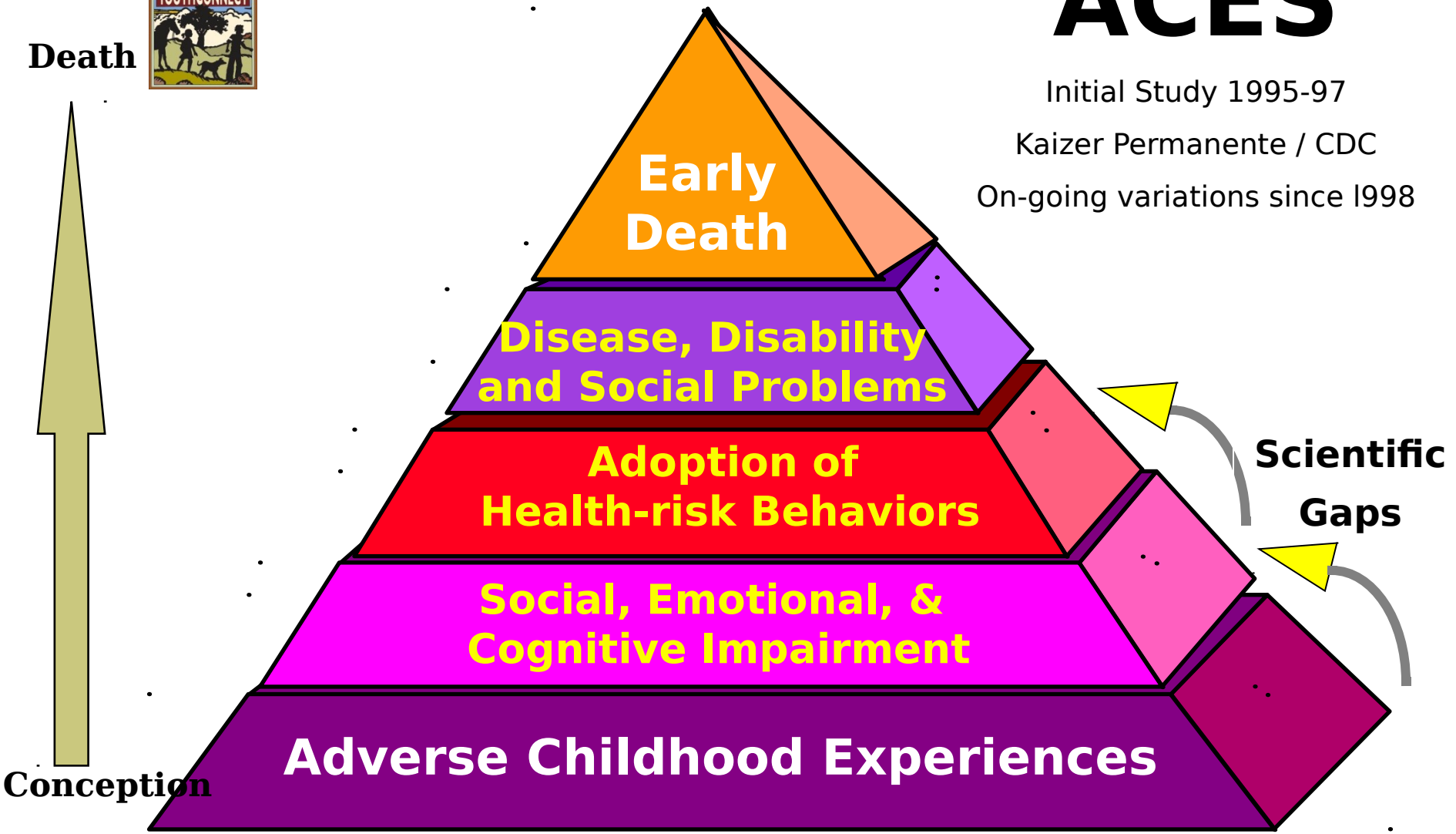
- Parent and family dynamics
- Neighborhood safety and economics
- School dynamics
- Cognitive stimulation
- Emotional support and/or trauma

# ACES

Initial Study 1995-97

Kaizer Permanente / CDC

On-going variations since l998




**Mechanisms by which *Adverse Childhood Experiences* influence Health and Well-being Throughout the Lifespan**

# Some Disturbing Trends.....

- Abuse and neglect filings
- **Domestic court filings**

- Child / Teen Suicides
- **Increased use of psychotropic meds**

- Truancy and school drop out rates
- Delinquency rates
- **School aggression and violence**

- **Childhood health and obesity**
- **Autism spectrum**
- **Nature deficit**
- **Technology seduction**

- **Face book / social media pressures**
- **Sexualizing of children / teens**

## Military Specific

- **Multiple deployments**
- **Parental physical and mental disabilities (PTS-D)**
- Multiple school disruptions
- Stereotyped labeling

# Definition of Trauma

(Online Wordsmith)

1. **A wound or injury to the body**, or the resulting condition of the body or damaged body part. Synonyms insult (2) , injury (2) , wound [1]

2. **An emotional shock** that has a deep and lasting effect on one's mental and emotional life. Similar Words pain , harm , damage , wound [1] , suffering , ordeal , insult , hurt , shock [1]

## TRAUMA

1. **A wound or injury to the body**, or the resulting condition of the body or damaged body part. Synonyms insult (2) , injury (2) , wound [1]
2. **An emotional shock** that has a deep and lasting effect on one's mental and emotional life. Similar Words pain , harm , damage , wound [1] , suffering , ordeal , insult , hurt , shock [1]

# What does trauma do?

- **Trauma shapes a person's basic beliefs** about……..
  - Personal identity and relationships – (hard to make friends)
  - World view -- (positive / negative outlook on life)
  - Purpose and Spirituality -- HOPE

- **Trauma impacts neuro-pathways**…….
  - Hyper vigilant / sense of danger (FEAR)
  - Misread social cues – (over controlling or over submissive)
  - Emotionally volatile – (difficulty self regulating emotions)
  - Addictive / reliant behavior – (over dependencies)

# Some Things to Consider

- Perception = Reality
- “Transference” often occurs
- Beneath a mad is often a “sad or scared”
- Teens often talk more to “conceal than reveal”
- To self-regulate emotions, we need to understand their cause
- Discovering “giftedness” & developing it changes lives
- We all learn differently
- Doing for others does allot for us

# “False Perceptions”

**Transference** – when a person transfers feelings and thoughts from past experiences into present situations and relationships

**Counter-Transference** – when the person receiving the transference reacts back with a transference of their own

# Social Emotional Learning Process….

**Help children and youth…..**

- **Verbalize emotions** instead of harming themselves or others…..then…..
- **Connect their feelings** to an understanding of their cause….and…..
- **Practice regulating feelings** in relationships which help them **develop social skills**…..and…..
- Do it **over and over again**

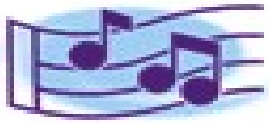
Right side of brain

Left side of brain

Left side of body

Right side of body

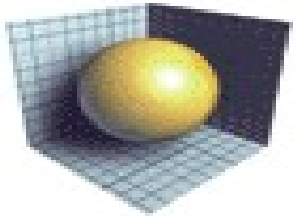
Creativity



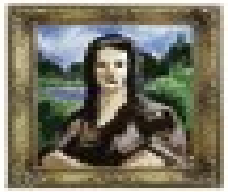
Music

Spoken Language

Reasoning



Spatial Orientation



Artistic awareness

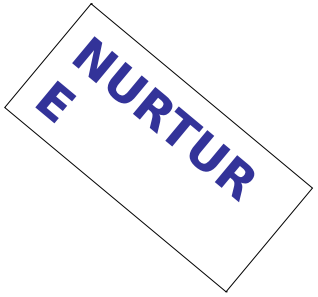
Number skills

Written language

# Enriched Learning Environments

**“Resilience Building”**

- Time & Attention
- Touch & Warmth
- Safety & Predictability
- Giftedness & Opportunity
- Learning & Literacy
- Exercise & Nature (animals)




**Biology** (Nature)

**Environment** (Nurture)

Peace on Earth

# Walking our Children down "The Road of "Resilience"

**Patrick Hobin, M.A.**
***Family Services Coordinator***
***Military Family Initiative***

***303.548.8519***

***www.cbryouthconnect.org***

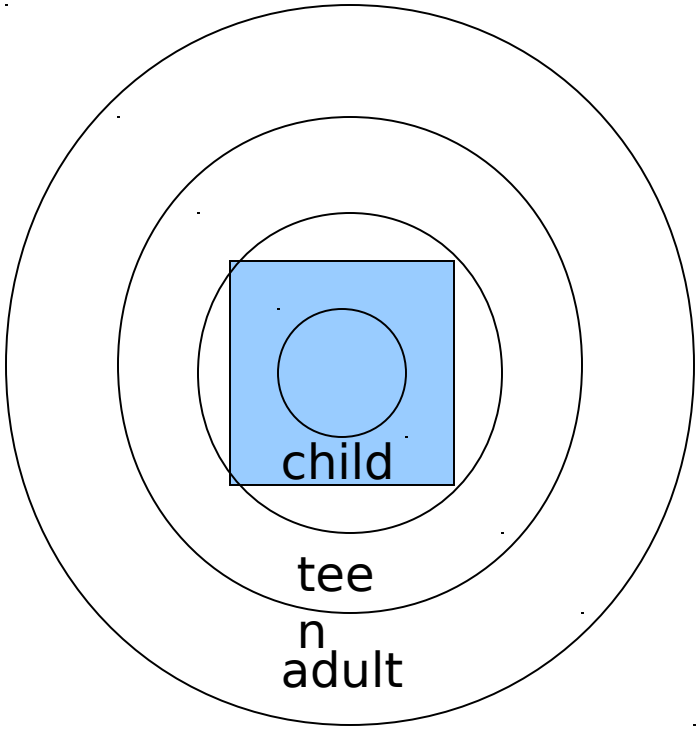
# Enriched Learning Environments

Settings where ……..

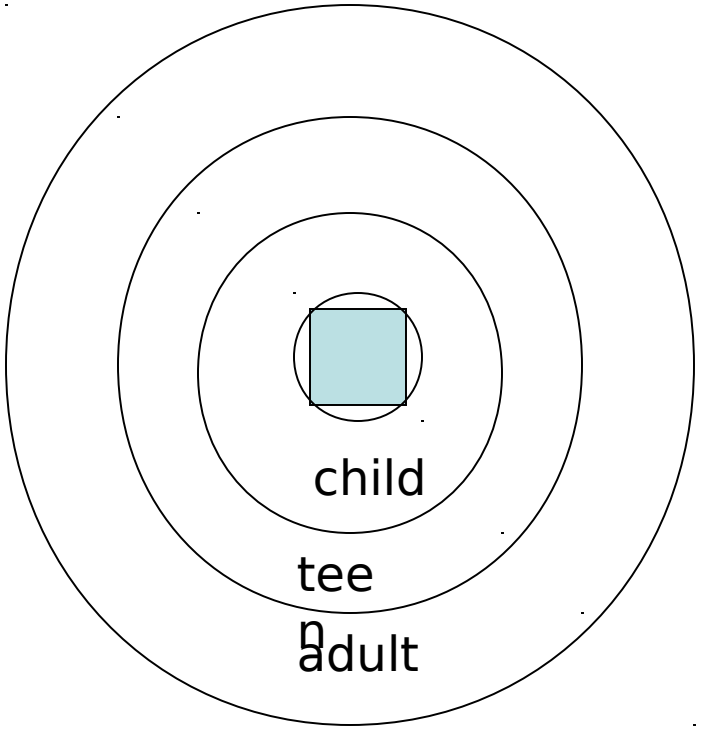
- an abundance of nurturing relationships
- are combined with motivating opportunities
  PLUS choice
- to promote the optimum conditions for a person
  - to discover their potential (personal gifts and talents)
  - to develop social emotional skills (regulate emotions & make friends)
  - and to build self confidence and **HOPE**
- **I.e. Protective Factors that promote Resilience**

GRANDKIDS
All you need is Love. All you need is Love
Love is all you need. Love, Love,
Love, Love, Love. Love, Love,
All you need is Love. All you need
Love, Love, Love is all you need.
Love, Love. Love, Love, Love.
Love. All you need is Love. All you
Love, Love, Love is all you need.
Love. Love, Love, Love. Love,
you need is Love. All you need is
Love is all you need. Love, Love,
Love. Love, Love, Love.
Love. All you need is Love, Love,
you need. Love, Love, Love,
To Grandma
Happy Mother's Day!
I Love YOU
carter

# LOVE BOX

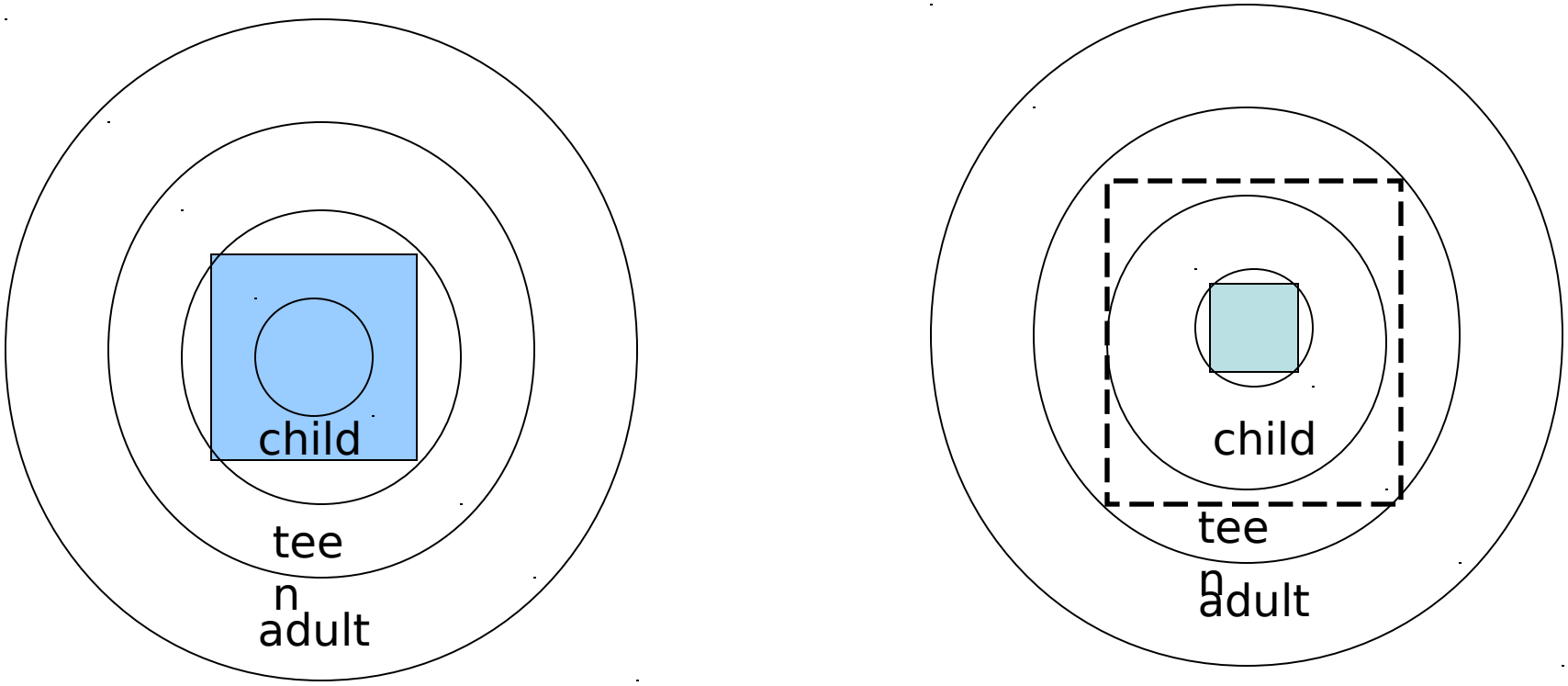



**DESIRED**

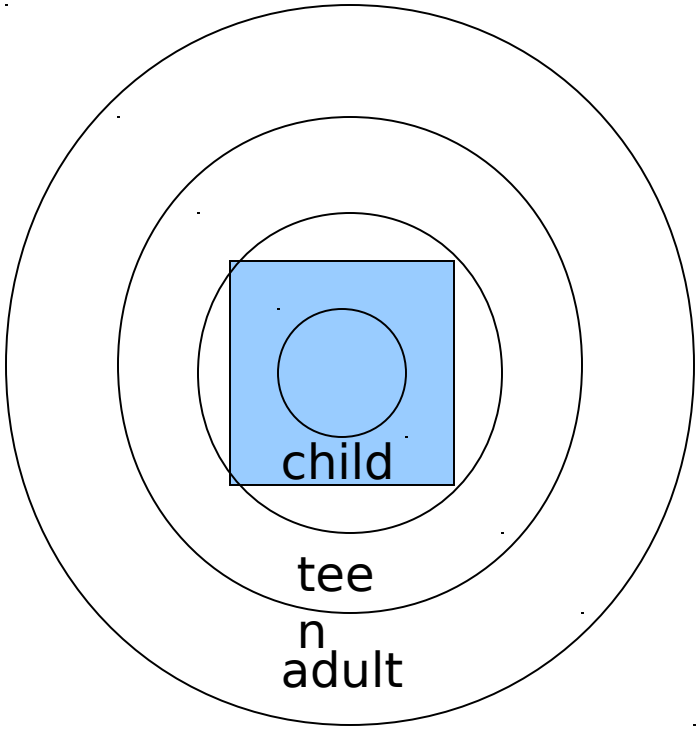


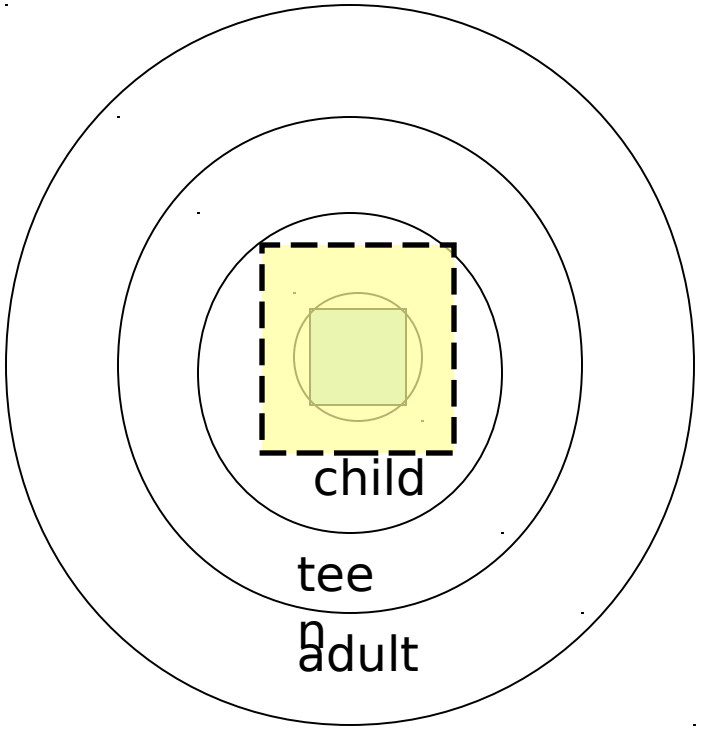

**AT-RISK**

# LOVE BOX



# LOVE BOX



# Consequences of trauma

# FEELINGS
# OF
# “GUILT”

“Magical Thinking”

# Social / Emotional Learning

"The process of acquiring **skills**

- To recognize and manage emotions
- To develop caring and concern for others
- To make responsible decisions
- To establish positive relationships
- And to handle challenging situations effectively"

# Human Learning via Modeling

- Imitation (I do what I see others do)
- Identification (I picture myself like them)
- Introjection (I become like them)

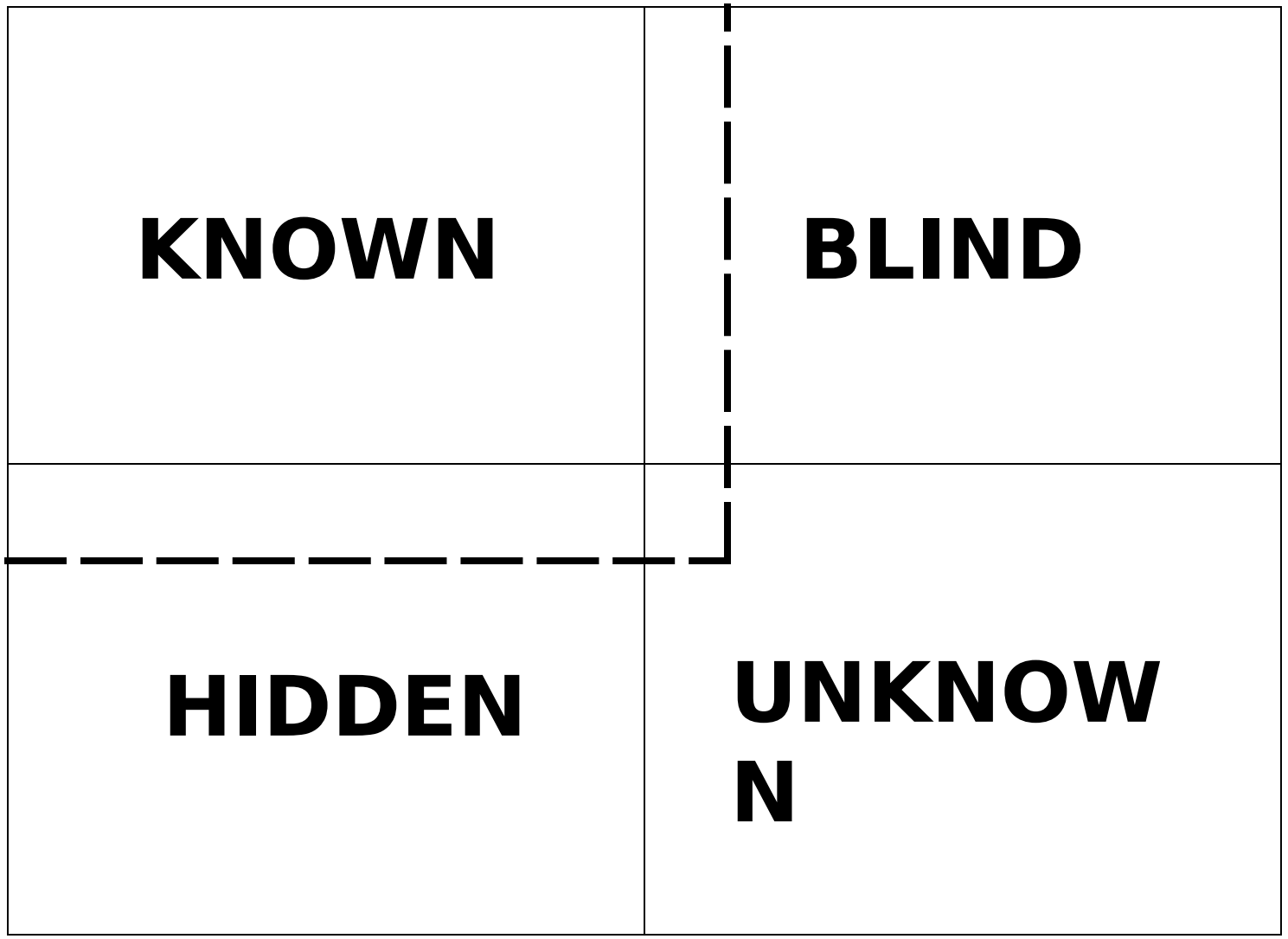
# "The Road of Resilience"

- ***Help buffer the risks*** our children encounter each day with **"protections".**
- ***Create enriched learning environments*** for our children – in our homes and communities
- ***Encourage their natural giftedness*** to bloom
- ***Develop close relationships*** with our children and their friends
- ***Do self care*** *(See Jo and Hari)*

# Jo – Hari Window

| | |
|---|---|
| **KNOWN** | **BLIND** |
| **HIDDEN** | **UNKNOWN** |

# Jo – Hari Window



Change is inevitable; growth is optional.

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**April 13, 2011**

# Building Resiliency in Children: A Parent's Guide

Presented by Military & Family Life Consultants

# Objectives

» Participants will learn:

- Characteristics of resilient children
- Methods for building resilience in children
- Methods for building resilience during deployment

# Agenda

- Introduction
- Definition
- Challenges of Life
- Characteristics of Resilient Children
- Strengthening Bonds with Your Child
- Making Connections
- Building Your Child's Character
- Helping Your Child Gain Control
- Teaching Coping Skills
- Teaching Optimism
- Encouraging Children to Ask for Support
- Building Resilience During Deployment

# Introduction

- Children have many challenges and difficult situations in life just as adults do
- Some children seem to have a natural resilience in challenging situations while others do not
- Most any child can be taught to improve their resiliency
- This presentation will focus on how parents can help their children become more resilient

# Definition

» **Resilience <u>is</u>:**

The capacity to rise above difficult circumstances; the ability to recover from setbacks; a quality of bouncing back.

» **Resilience <u>is not</u>:**

Invulnerability or being perfect

# Challenges of Life

Children face many challenges in life:

- Separation from parent during deployment
- Issues regarding return of the deployed parent
- Conflicts with parents and siblings
- Difficulties with friends
- Bullying
- School – grades, teachers, other children
- Loss of a loved one or pet
- Increased responsibilities: chores, homework, extra curricular activities

# Characteristics of Resilient Children

Resilient children have:

- Positive self-esteem
- Relationships with caring adults
- Ability to care for others
- Effective problem solving skills
- An acceptance that change is part of life

# Building Resiliency in Children: What Parents Can Do

# Strengthening Bonds with Your Child

Strengthening bonds includes:

» Spending special time with them

» Listening to them – their feelings, problems, joys, ideas

» Giving them praise

# Making Connections

Making connections includes maintaining close ties to family, friends, school, and community

- Teach your child how to be a friend and make friends
- Build a strong family network which includes extended family members and friends
- Provide a sense of physical and emotional security at home

# Building Your Child's Character

- Teach your values to your child and help them clarify their own values
- Get your child involved in volunteer work
- Teach empathy
- Encourage them to help at home

# Helping Your Child Gain Control

Teaching a sense of control includes:

» Helping your child see that change is part of life

» Teaching that not all circumstances are under their control

» Helping your child see that their actions can effect change

# Teaching Coping Skills

Learning coping skills builds confidence and competence

Coping skills should include:

- Problem solving skills
- Relaxation skills
- Healthy nutrition
- Exercise
- Rest
- Changing destructive thinking

# Teaching Optimism

- When giving feedback, start with the positive
- Maintain a positive attitude yourself
- When they express distress about something, try to help them see something positive in the situation
- Help them understand in times of distress that things will get better

# Encouraging Children to Ask for Support

- Tell them that everyone needs support from others at times
- Help them understand that asking for help is a sign of strength
- Let them know they can ask for help from you, a teacher, friend, other family member, coach or clergy
- Tell them about times when you have sought support from others and how it helped

# Building Resilience During Deployment

- Provide your children with accurate but age appropriate information
- Allow your children to help with duties in the home and take on additional chores if they are ready
- Let them have a role in making plans for staying in touch with the deployed parent
- Teach your children that their military parent is serving our country
- Talk to your children about their feelings and yours

# Summary

- Most any child can be taught to improve their resiliency
- Strengthening bonds with parents is a good way to start building resiliency
- Help your child maintain connections with family and friends
- Teach children coping skills
- Help them remain optimistic
- During deployment, give them information and help them express feelings

# Questions

# Resources

- Military Community Services
- Chaplain and Local Clergy
- Military OneSource (800) 342-9647
- TRICARE www.tricare.osd.mil
- Behavioral Health Services

# References


- *10 Tips for Building Resilience in Children and Teens*, Early Childhood Learning & Knowledge Center, http://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/
- *Building Resiliency in Children*, Child Action, Inc. www.childaction.org
- *Backbone and Bounce: Building Resilience*, by Patty Wipflerl, Hand in Hand, Nurturing the Parent-Child Connection, www.handinhandparenting.org
- *Building Resilience in Children with Challenges*, National Center for Learning Disabilities, www.education.com
- *A Parent's Guide to Building Resilience in Children and Teens: Giving Your Child Roots and Wings*, by Kenneth R. Ginsberg, c. 2006

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# Spiritual Resilience and Military Youth

CH (COL) Jonathan Gibbs
Garrison Chaplain
Fort Carson, CO

# Agenda

- Religion and Resilience
- Youth Resilience
- The Challenge of Youth and Religion
- Key Faith Formation Factors
- Religious Programs and Resilience
- Spiritual Resilience and Educators
- Soldier-Family Ministry Forum

# U.S. Population is Religious and Many People Turn to Religion in Response to Crisis or Loss

- 92% believe in God (60% personal God) (Pew, 2007)
- 83% report affiliation with a religion (94% Christian) (Pew)
- 80% say religion is very or fairly important (Gallup 2009)
- 63% are members of a church, synagogue or mosque (Gallup)
- 58% pray every day (75% at least weekly) (Pew)
- 42% attended religious services in last 7 days (Gallup)

# Religion and Psychological Stress

## Perceived Stress

Watson et al (2002). Int'l J Psychology of Religion, 12(4), 255-276 (Iran & US)

Pollard et al. (2004). Psychological Reports, 95(3,Part1), 999-1007

Maltby & (2004). Personality and Individual Differences, 36(6), 1275-1290

Steffen & Masters (2005). Annals of Behavioral Medicine, 30(3), 217-224.

Cousson-Gelie et al. (2005). Psychological Reports, 97(3), 699-711 (breast CA)

Michalsen et al. (2005). Medical Science Monitor, 11(12), CR555-561

Ng et al. (2005). Social Work in Health Care, 41(1), 33-52.

Oman et al. (2006). Journal of Consulting & Clinical Psychology, *74*(4), 714-719

Bowen et al. (2006). Depression and Anxiety, 23(5), 266-273

Dailey & Stewart (2007). Research in Nursing & Health 30, 61-71

# Poor Health Behaviors, Difficulty with Self- Regulation

(Handbook of Religion and Health, 2001,Koenig, McCullough, Larson)

Religious involvement is related to:

- Less cigarette smoking, especially among **the young**
  (102 of 117 studies show significantly lower rates)
- More exercise
  (24 of 36 studies show more likely to exercise)
- Less extra-marital sex, safer sexual practices (fewer pa
  (74 of 82 studies show significant relationships)
- Less alcohol/drug use, especially among **the young**
  (276 of 324 studies show significantly lower rates)

# Anger, Hostility, Violence
(systematic review)

Religious involvement is related to:

- Less anger, hostility
  (23 of 35 studies show significantly less)
- Less delinquency and crime
  (81 of 102 studies show significantly lower rates)
- Better school performance / grades
  (10 of 10 studies show better performance)

# Isolation, lack of support
(systematic review)

Religious involvement is related to:

- Social support greater
  (57 of 68 studies find significantly greater)

# Divorce, domestic abuse, other family stress

(systematic review)

Religious involvement is related to:

- Marital stability greater - less divorce, greater satisfaction, less spousal abuse
  (68 of 79 studies find significantly greater marital stability)

# Depression and well-being
(systematic review)

Religious involvement is related to:

- Less depression, faster recovery from depression (204 of 324 studies show less depression among religio
- Greater well-being, happiness, meaning, purpose, hope (278 of 359 studies show positive emotions higher in religious) [**indicators of resilience**]

# Anxiety and PTSD
(systematic review)

Religious involvement is related to:

- Less anxiety, less PTSD
  (125 of 225 studies report significantly less)

# Hope, Optimism, Meaning and Purpose

(systematic review)

Religious involvement is related to:

- Significantly greater Optimism (20 of 24 studies)
- Significantly more Hope (26 of 36 studies)
- Significantly more purpose and meaning (40 of 43 studies)

See chapter on Suicide, *Handbook of Religion and Health, 2nd Ed*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2011

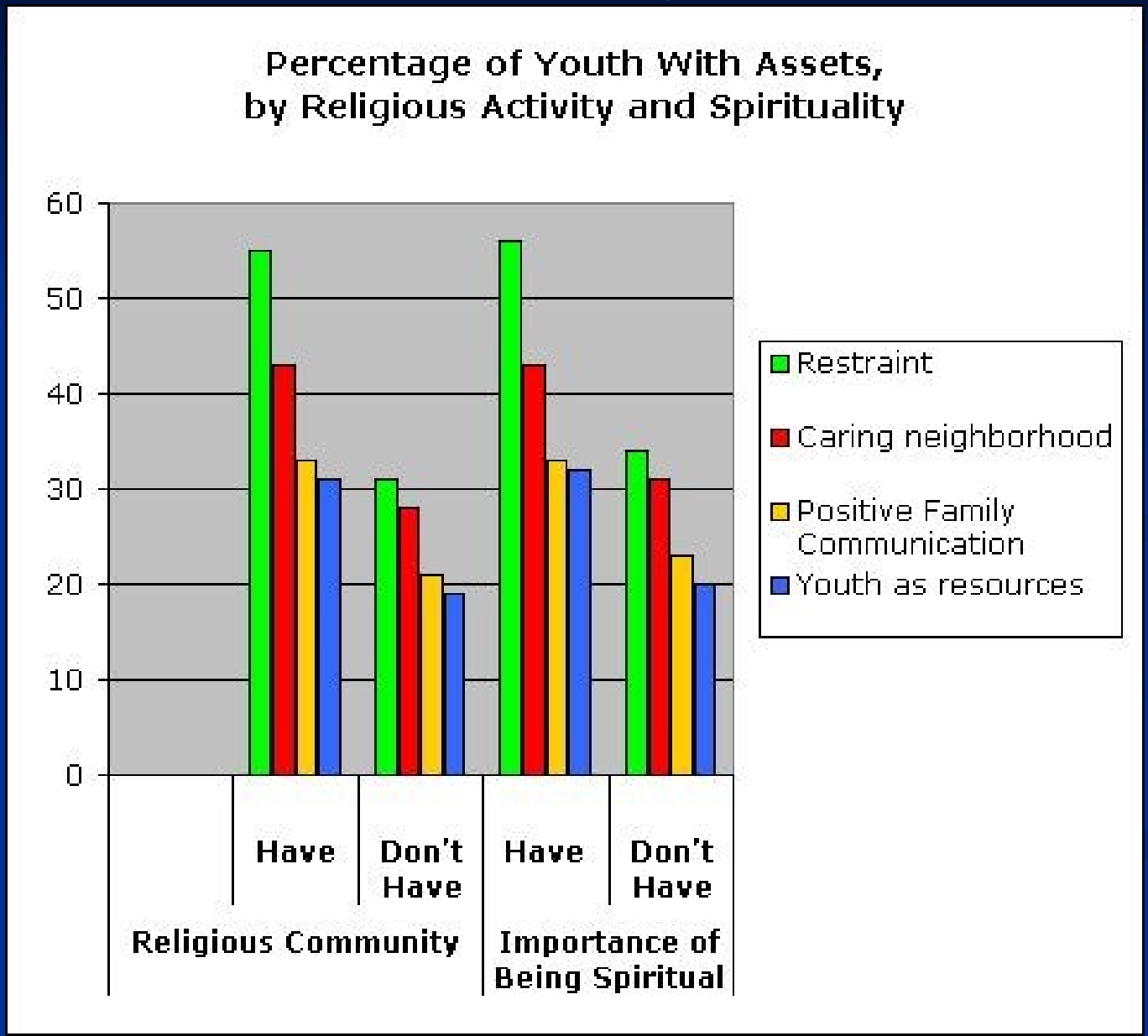
# Religion and suicide
(systematic review)

Religious involvement is related to:

- More negative attitudes toward suicide, fewer suicide attempts & fewer completed suicides
(106 of 141 studies)

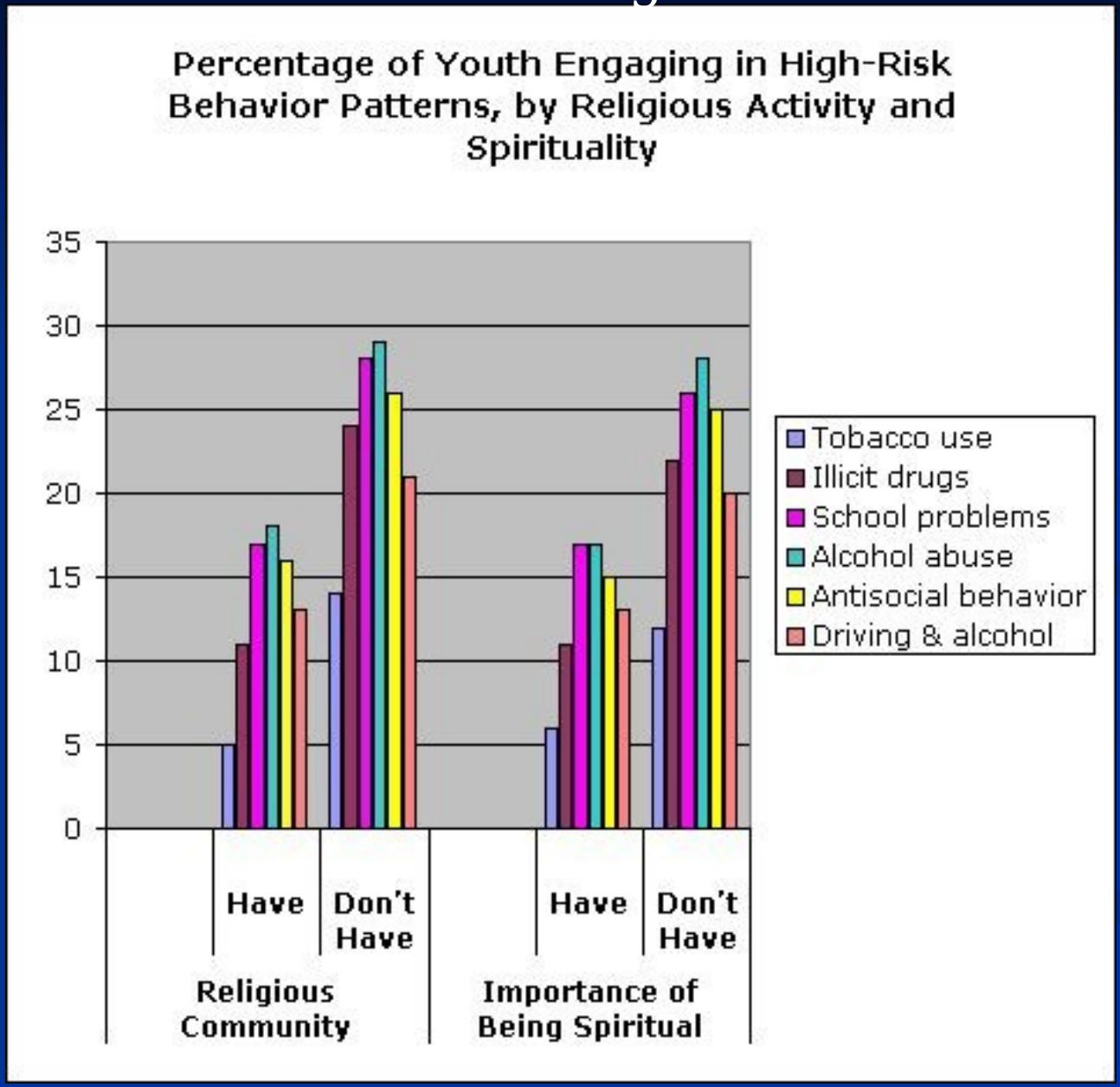
# Spirituality and Adolescent Well-Being: Selected No

http://www.search-institute.org



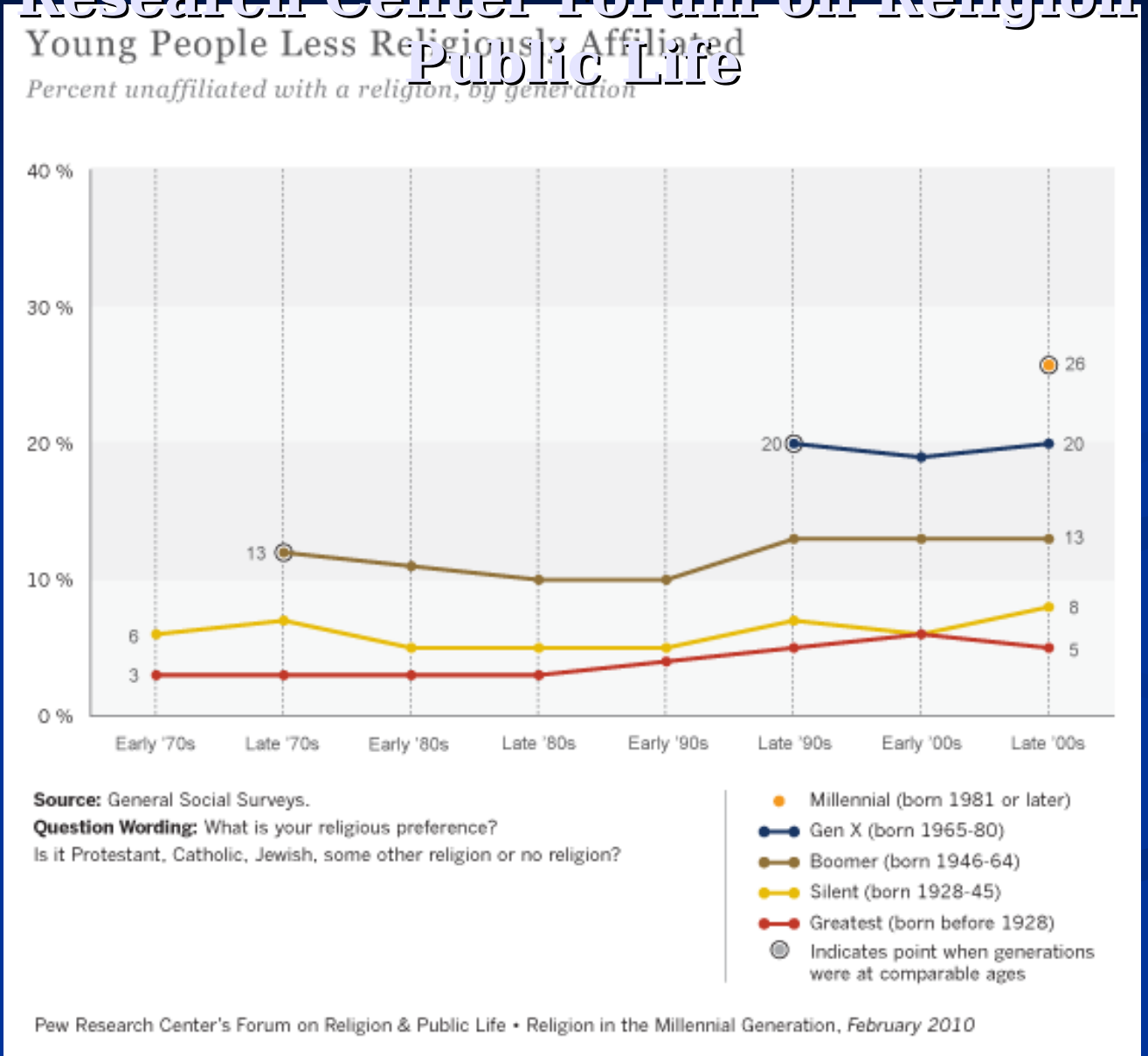
# Spirituality and Adolescent Well-Being: Selected N

http://www.search-institute.org



# The Challenge for the Church

## Pew Research Center Forum on Religion and Public Life



# The Challenge for the Church

## Dr Roland Martinson, Luther Seminary

- High percentages (approx. 50-95%) of baptized children participate in children's ministries and confirmation.
- High percentages (approx. 65-75%) of baptized and confirmed youth cease participation in worship and congregational ministries by age 21.
- High percentages (approx. 50-60%) of baptized and confirmed youth who ceased participation in worship and congregational ministries by age 21 have not returned to any faith community by age 35.

# The Challenge for the Church

## Dr Roland Martinson, Luther Seminary

- The baptized and confirmed youth who ceased participation in a faith community by age 21 and have not returned by age 35 have an anemic, distorted faith and theology which neither glorifies God nor serves humanity nor blesses them.
- Approximately 10% of baptized children/youth continue in the life of the church and “grow in grace”/vocation leadership within the faith community and its mission in the world.

# The Key 8 Faith Formation Factors

## Dr Roland Martinson, Luther Seminary

- Faith integrated into family identity and practice
- Three or more adult mentors of vital faith
- Three or more months service in the church
- Apprenticed early into leadership in their church

# The Key 8 Faith Formation Factors

## Dr Roland Martinson, Luther Seminary

- Engaging, meaningful church experience in which youth are valued
- Excellent senior high/young adult ministry
- Encouraged by strong Christian friend(s)
- Support within an engaging Christian community during a personal crisis

# Religious Programs and Resilience

- Ritual and spiritual disciplines
- Family and the faith community
- Worship involvement
- Special Events (liturgical calendar)
- Service projects
- Mentorship

# Youth/Religious Education Programs and Resilience

- AWANA
- Children's Church
- Club Beyond
- Catholic Confirmation Classes
- Religious Education/Sunday School Classes
- Vacation Bible School
- Winter Bible Sports Camp
- Youth Ministry Programs

# Spiritual Resilience and Educators

- Treat students holistically: acknowledge the religious/spiritual component of their lives
- Encourage students to discuss their issues/concerns with their religious leader
- Integrate discussion of religious/moral values into classes where appropriate
- Be familiar with the additional stressors military youth face
- Know the individual student's family situation

# Soldier-Family Ministry Forum

- Command sponsored, chaplain led partnership with community religious or faith based organizations
- Foster collaboration and information sharing about faith based services, programs, and resources available to Soldiers/Families in the community
- Provide groups opportunity to network, share best practices, and learn about educational/training opportunities and resources to support their programs
- Provide SME on Soldier/Family needs and military culture to local groups interested in military ministry

# Resources

- The National Study of Youth and Religion (Notre Dame & UNC-Chapel Hill)
  http://www.youthandreligion.org/
- Center for Spiritual Development in Childhood & Adolescence (Search Institute)
  http://www.search-institute.org/spiritual-development
- Center for Spirituality, Theology & Health (Duke)
  http://www.spiritualityandhealth.duke.edu/index.html
- Association for the Sociology of Religion
  http://www.sociologyofreligion.com
- Hartford Institute for Religion Research
  http://hirr.hartsem.edu/sociology/sociology.html
- Faith Lives of Youth and Young Adults (Luther Seminary & SW Baptist Seminary)
  http://www.FaithFactors.com/
- Barna Group http://www.barna.org/
- Pew Forum on Religion and Public Life http://pewforum.org/

# QUESTIONS?

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# Military Children and Youth Symposium

**Peterson Air Force Base, Colorado**

ISFAC
Inter-Service Family Assistance Committee

**April 13, 2011**

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